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HEMINGWAY

DISSEMINATION of RECREATION INFORMATION

SEMINOLE RANGER DISTRICT

OCALA NATIONAL FOREST

By

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March, 1980

ABSTRACT

Hemingway, George B. - DISSEMINATION OF RECREATION INFORMATION - March, 1980.

A study of the recreation visitor to the Seminole Ranger District, Ocala National Forest which includes origin of visitor, accessibility and visitor transportation along with tabulation of information requested by the visitor. Analysis indicated 76% of the recreation opportunity information requested between November, 1978, and February, 1980 was not available in a format readily distributable to the public. Alternatives for improving the effectiveness and efficiency of dissemination of recreation opportunity information are analyzed.

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INTRODUCTION

The Seminole Ranger District is one of the most heavily used Ranger Districts in the United States. For the past five years, the district's recreation use has been around two million visitor days use each year.

The Seminole District is the Southern District within the Ocala National Forest which contains two Ranger Districts. The Ocala National Forest is the Southern-most National Forest in the continental United States. The Forest is located approximately in the geographic center of the Peninsula and on the Northern edge of the heavily used Winter and Summer privately developed tourist attractions. The forest is bounded on the North and West by the Oklawaha River, on the East by Lake George and the St. Johns River and on the South by State Highway 42.

The Forest is unique in many ways and is one of the most interesting areas to be found in the South. It contains the largest area of sand pine (*Pinus clausa*) in the world. This extensive area of sand pine with its longleaf pine islands, the numerous clear lakes and springs, the semi-tropical palm and hardwood hammocks along with excellent hunting and fishing combined with warm climatic conditions, make it one of the best vacation or recreation areas in the Country.

For the vacationing public, there are several major attractions that attract visitors into the area. Silver Springs is located within five miles of the forest boundary. Disney World, Sea World, Circus World, Stars Hall of Fame and Daytona Beach are within 40 miles of the District boundary. The Kennedy Space Center is a one hour drive from the District. In addition to these attractions, many of the fishing waters located adjacent to the Forest have National recognition. These include the St. Johns River, Lake George, Orange Lake, Rodman Reservoir and the Oklawaha River.

II. PURPOSE

Recreation use on the Seminole is not seasonal, but yearlong. However, the geographic location where the visitors come from to visit the District is seasonal. During the period of April through October, the majority of the recreation visitors are from Florida. A dramatic change in clientele takes place between November and Easter with the tremendous influx of visitors from the Northern states.

Visitor patterns indicate that the day use recreation visitor during the summer ranges from 25% local (within 25 miles of District) to 75% being within a 75 mile radius of the District. The overnight visitor from within the state during the summer months averages 150 miles from home for the majority. /1

In summary, it is safe to conclude that the majority of our Recreation visitors are not local.

A review of visitor use patterns along with the most frequent questions asked by various means, it is easily determined that the average recreation user does not realize the various recreation opportunities available on the District. The average person also has difficulty in obtaining information about the National Forest - our programs, recreation opportunities, services provided, restrictions, etc..

The purpose of this study is for the development of a plan to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of dissemination of information to the public.

/1 Information obtained from informal observation by field personnel.

III. ANALYSIS

A. Current Situation

Analysis of our present situation indicates the public seeking information, generally receives information through -

- Personal contact with field personnel
- Visit to Rangers Office
- Phone call to Office
- Written inquiry
- Contacts with other forest visitors
- Publications and news media.

The present system is basically inefficient and may be ineffective, depending on the source of the information received by the potential recreation user.

The system is inefficient since the potential user must -

- Seek out a Forest officer
- Find the Rangers office
- Find the correct office to phone for information
- Locate the correct agency and address to write for information
- Publications are not easily obtained which contains the information being sought by the Recreationist.

The present method by which the public obtains their information has disadvantages and is somewhat ineffective due to -

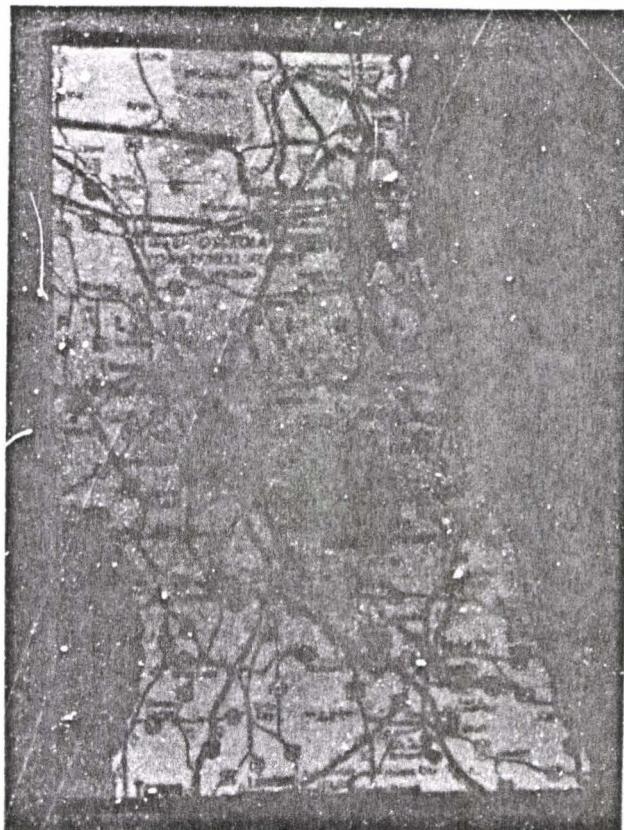
- Contacts with field personnel - it is difficult for all field personnel to keep current on all opportunities and regulations concerning public use.

- Visit to Ranger's office - we do not have a documented source of information for all recreational activities to provide the public with desired recreational activities or experiences.
The visitor must rely on the personal knowledge of the person(s) in the office at the time. This method is also time consuming.
- Phone calls - This has the same disadvantages as the office visit plus the difficulty of explaining things without the benefit of visual aids.
- Written inquiries - Attempts have been made to develop a form letter reply for responding to written inquiries. This has been less than successful due to the diversity of information requested.
Most inquiries require individual letters which is time consuming.
- Contacts with other forest visitors - The visitors must assume the information he is receiving is correct.
- Publications and News Media - Considerable misleading and/or incorrect information occurs in privately published publications and in news articles.

B. Accessibility and Visitor Transportation

The Forest is strategically located between Interstate Highways 75 and 95, which are major travel routes bringing tourists into the Central Florida area. Interstate 75 runs within 10 miles of the Forest boundary while Interstate 95 traverses within 20 miles of the boundary. State Highway 40 passes through the center of the Forest in an East-West direction. Highway 40 is the main travel route for tourists leaving I-75 for Daytona Beach. State Highway 19 passes through the Forest in a North-South direction. This highway is the primary entry into the Forest for the public from the Orlando area and the South Florida Region. It is also the primary route for visitors from the Metro-Jacksonville area to the North.

State Highway 42 is an East-West highway which forms the South boundary of the Forest and the Seminole District. This highway is primarily utilized by the recreationist living within 50 miles of the Forest boundary.



The Florida Department of Transportation conducted an auto survey during the 1st and 2nd quarters of 1979. Their survey found that 38% of the Florida tourists entered the State via I-75 and 25% via I-95. The Ocala National Forest lies between these two major highways with easy access to the National Forest from the Interstate highways. Based on 1979 Florida Department of Tourism figures (Table 6), this means over thirteen million out-of-State visitors are driving within 20 miles of the Forest. Table 1 is a summary of 1979 traffic data for three of the major State highways which serve as access routes to the Ocala National Forest.

TABLE 1

<u>HIGHWAY #</u>	<u>AVERAGE CARS PER WEEKDAY</u>	<u>SAMPLE POINT</u>
40	7,907	Olkawaha River
40	2,654	Half Moon Lake
40	2,603	Highway 19 Intersection
19	2,083	Intersection 445
42	1,305	County Line West of Altoona
42	1,157	Highway 450 Intersection

Surveys conducted by the Florida Department of Tourism between 1975 and 1979 show the number of tourists entering the State by mode of travel (Table 2). These surveys also analyzed the type lodging utilized by the visitors. This survey indicated an average of 11% of the auto visitors utilized campground facilities for lodging (Table 3).

TABLE 2TOTAL FLORIDA VISITORS BY MODE OF TRAVEL /2

<u>YEAR</u>	<u>TOTAL VISITORS</u>	<u>AUTO VISITORS</u>	<u>AIR VISITORS</u>
1975	26,708,000	19,346,000	7,362,000
1976	28,927,000	20,900,000	8,027,000
1977	29,175,000	20,662,000	8,513,000
1978	32,369,000	22,060,000	10,309,000
1979 /1	30,235,000	20,845,000	9,390,000

/1 Does not include 4th quarter air travelers

/2 Source - Florida Tourist Study - Florida Division of Tourism

TABLE 3

**PERCENT OUT-OF-STATE VISITORS
UTILIZING CAMPGROUND LODGING /1**

<u>YEAR</u>	<u>TOTAL VISITORS</u>	<u>AUTO VISITORS</u>	<u>AIR VISITORS</u>
1975	26,708,000	8.8	.8
1976	28,927,000	11.8	1.5
1977	29,175,000	11.1	1.0
1978	32,369,000	10.8	1.0
1979 /2	30,235,000	12.6	Not available

/1 Source: Florida Tourist Study - Florida Division of Tourism

/2 Does not include 4th quarter Air Travelers

C. Visitor Origin

In order to get an idea of the home base of the recreation users on the Seminole District, two sampling methods were used to make this determination:

1. Review Double Sample Recreation use information gathered at Alexander Springs and Clearwater Lake Recreation areas. The Alexander Springs sample was taken in 1978 while Clearwater Lake was sampled in 1979. Both areas were sampled from the last week in May through the first week in September.
2. Document State license plates of recreationist utilizing Alexander Springs, Big Bass Lake and Big Scrub Recreation areas during December, January and early February.

Information from the Double Sample records which were gathered during the summer months of 1978 and 1979 indicates that 93% of the visitors to our developed recreation sites were Florida residents. However, the data gathered in December, 1979, January, and early February, 1980 showed a complete reversal of this pattern. During this sampling period, Florida license plates represented 5% of the total. In December, the number from Florida ran as high as 10%. This was due to the influx of hunters. The majority of the visitors were from Michigan, Illinois, Indiana, New York, Pennsylvania and Canada (Ontario). Samples taken during this period within selected recreation sites averaged 167 vehicles per sample date.

D. Survey of Information Sought by District Visitors

In October, 1979, all Seminole District personnel were instructed to document questions they were asked by forest users. These questions were generated by personal contacts in the field and in the office along with phone calls and letters. I had planned to review the files for the past few years in order to document the nature of information sought by those writing the District. To my dismay, I was informed that letters of inquiry were purged every six months. This survey needs to be conducted yearlong in order to get an accurate assessment of information sought by the visitor since various recreation uses are somewhat seasonal. During the period this survey was conducted, the highest percentage of information sought was in reference to hunting. Deer hunting season runs from the second week in November thru the second week in January.

Table 4 is a summary of the broad catagories of information the Forest visitors were seeking.

After hunting questions, the next highest catagories were directed by residents concerning residential fuel wood permits and from campers on gathering firewood for camp fires. We only tallied residential fuel wood questions from those that asked the questions by personal contacts to field personnel, phone calls or by letter.

The next highest catagory recorded dealt with camping regulations, ie - where, length of stay, reservations and dispersed use.

The remainder of the information sought was spread in several recreational activities.

TABLE 4SUMMARY OF VISITOR REQUESTSNOVEMBER, 1979 THRU CUGH JANUARY, 1980

	<u>PERCENT</u>	/1
Scuba Diving	5	
ORV	5	
Artifacts	1	
Hunting Regulations	12	
Fishing Regulations	2	
Fishing areas	3	
Fuelwood Permits	11	
Fire Wood for Campers	11	
Camping fees	6	
Christmas tree area	5	
Camping regulations	10	
Recreation area facilities	6	
Canoeing information	4	
Hiking information	6	
Ocala National Forest maps	3	
Bike trails	1	
Self-guided tours	1	
Golden Age Pasoport	5	
Dumping Station	1	
Horse Trails	1	

/1 Based on 628 documented questions

E. Ranger Office Contacts

The District kept records of the number of people seeking information at the Seminole Ranger's office during the periods of November, 1974, through March, 1975, and again in 1978 (Table 5). No attempt was made to document the information being sought. However, the information does give an indication of the number of people visiting or calling the office seeking information. This information also points out the importance of the need for efficiency in providing information to the public.

TABLE 5
RANGER OFFICE CONTACTS

<u>DATE</u>	<u>VISITS</u>	<u>PHONE CALLS</u>
November, 1974	245	87
December, 1974	230	120
January, 1975	407	91
February, 1975	321	69
March, 1975	365	52
April, 1978	484	360
May, 1978	237	490
June, 1978	285	469
July, 1978	164	382
August, 1978	310	634
September, 1978	240	598
October, 1978	255	364
November, 1978	359	555
Totals.....	3904	4271
Monthly Average.....	300	328

IV. SUMMARY OF ANALYSIS

The Seminole Ranger District, due to its geographical location, receives considerable use from both Florida residents and out-of-State tourists. There are 776,000 people living within a 50-mile radius of Eustis, Florida, (District headquarters) and 2,650,000 within a 100-mile radius. In addition, 20,845,000 out-of-State visitors entered Florida by automobile in 1979. Six of the top tourist attractions within the State are all within 70 miles of the District. These attractions had a total visitation of 16,348,093 persons in 1979. (Table 6)

Our visitor analysis indicates that 95% of the District's winter visitors are from out-of-State, whereas, 93% of the summer visitors are from within the State. Observations by field personnel during the summer indicate that a high percentage of the Florida visitor to the Seminole District have traveled for 50 to 150 miles to recreate on the Forest.

Surveys made in 1974 and 1978 show that an average of 628 visitors per month contact the District headquarters to obtain information. This figure does not include written correspondence requesting information.

Analysis of the information requested over the past three months by actual and potential users indicates the visitor is seeking a wide spectrum of information.

With the potential for a continuing increase in usage by people with diverse demands, it is imperative that we improve and streamline our methods for providing visitors with information needed and requested.

1979 FLORIDA VISITORS

	1ST. QTR.		2ND. QTR.		3RD. QTR.		4TH.	
ARRIVED BY —	AIR		AUTO		AIR		AUTO	
NO. OF PEOPLE —	4,094,000		5,502,000		2,749,000		5,145,000	
TOURIST ATTRACTION	# OF PEOPLE	%						
SILVER SPRINGS	45,034	1.1	242,088	4.4	Not Available	—	174,930	3.4
DISNEY WORLD	753,296	18.4	1,628,592	29.6	596,533	21.7	1,322,265	25.7
SEA WORLD	245,640	6.0	522,690	9.5	283,147	10.3	483,630	9.4
BUSCH GARDENS	225,170	5.5	588,714	10.7	222,669	8.1	529,935	10.3
CIRCUS WORLD	Not Available	—	159,558	2.9	65,976	2.4	360,150	7.0
STARS HALL OF FAME	—	—	Not Available	—	82,470	3.0	154,350	3.0
DAYTONA BEACH AREA	↓	—	↓	—	Net Available	—	Not Available	—
<u>TOTAL</u>	1,269,140		3,141,642		1,250,795		3,025,260	
							1,278,594	
							3,783,510	
							—O—	

Table #6

1979 FLORIDA VISITORS¹

QTR.	2ND. QTR.		3RD. QTR.		4TH. QTR.		TOTAL							
AUTO 5,502,000	AIR 2,749,000		AUTO 5,145,000		AIR 2,547,000		AUTO 5,190,000		AIR — — —		AUTO 5,008,000		AIR and AUTO 30,235,000	
# OF PEOPLE	%	# OF PEOPLE	%	# OF PEOPLE	%	# OF PEOPLE	%	# OF PEOPLE	%	# OF PEOPLE	%	# OF PEOPLE	%	
242,088	4.4	Not Available	—	174,930	3.4	Not Available	—	238,740	4.6	Not Available	—	180,288	3.6	881,080
1,628,592	29.6	596,533	21.7	1,322,265	25.7	624,015	24.5	1,691,940	32.6	yet	—	1,257,008	25.1	7,873,649
522,690	9.5	283,147	10.3	483,630	9.4	297,999	11.7	591,660	11.4	—	—	375,600	7.5	2,800,366
588,714	10.7	222,669	8.1	529,935	10.3	191,025	7.5	617,610	11.9	—	—	475,760	9.5	2,850,883
159,558	2.9	65,976	2.4	360,150	7.0	66,222	2.6	472,290	9.1	—	—	220,352	4.4	1,344,548
Not Available	—	82,470	3.0	154,350	3.0	99,333	3.9	171,270	3.3	—	—	90,144	1.6	597,567
3,141,642	1,250,795	3,025,260	1,278,594	3,783,510	— O —	2,579,152	—	16,348,093	Total for these six areas	—	—	—	—	—

V. INFORMATION DISSEMINATION ALTERNATIVES

In order to improve our methods of getting information to the public, the following alternatives are available:

A. Roadside Information Stations (unmanned)

State Highways 40 and 19 are the primary routes utilized by the public entering the Ocala National Forest. Highway 40 averaged over 2,600 vehicles per weekday in 1979 at two sampling points within the Forest boundary. During the same period, State Highway 19 averaged 2,083 vehicles per weekday within the boundary.

It is conceivable that a large number of the potential visitors have little knowledge of recreation opportunities available on the Forest Unmanned Highway Information Stations (Figures 2 & 3) erected on State Highways 40 & 19 containing basic information on camping, hiking, hunting, etc. will give the uninformed visitor some basic recreation opportunity information.

Initial Cost per Station:

Information Panels - 2 @ \$75.00	\$150.00
Mounting materials	300.00
Landscaping	150.00
Access and parking	1,000.00
	<hr/>
	1,600.00
Costs for 4 Stations	\$6,400.00

Operation and Maintenance Costs

The costs for operating the Roadside Information Stations will be confined to maintenance of the site and repairs due to vandalism. Since the information that will be furnished will be of a broad general nature, updating should be rare.

Our estimated annual operating and maintenance costs are as follows:

Panel replacements - estimate 2 per year @ \$50	\$100.00
Labor - 1 man - 2 days @ \$60/day	120.00
Landscape maintenance - 10 Mondays @ \$60/day	600.00
Estimated annual maintenance costs for 4 Stations.....	<u>\$820.00</u>

Benefits:

Due to the lack of available information, it is difficult to estimate the number of people who will utilize the Roadside Information Stations.

If 2% of the average daily traffic utilized the stations, this would mean an average of 92 cars per day would stop at the 4 stations.

Florida Department of Tourism surveys indicate that auto visitors to the state average 2.6 persons per car. This means that these stations might serve 250 persons per day.

By prorating this project over a 5-year period, the average cost per person served would be as follows:

Initial cost	\$6,400
Annual maintenance cost - 5 years @	<u>4,100</u>
Total costs	\$10,500
Average use of 81,250/year X 5 years	406,250
Average cost per utilization	\$.026 per visitor

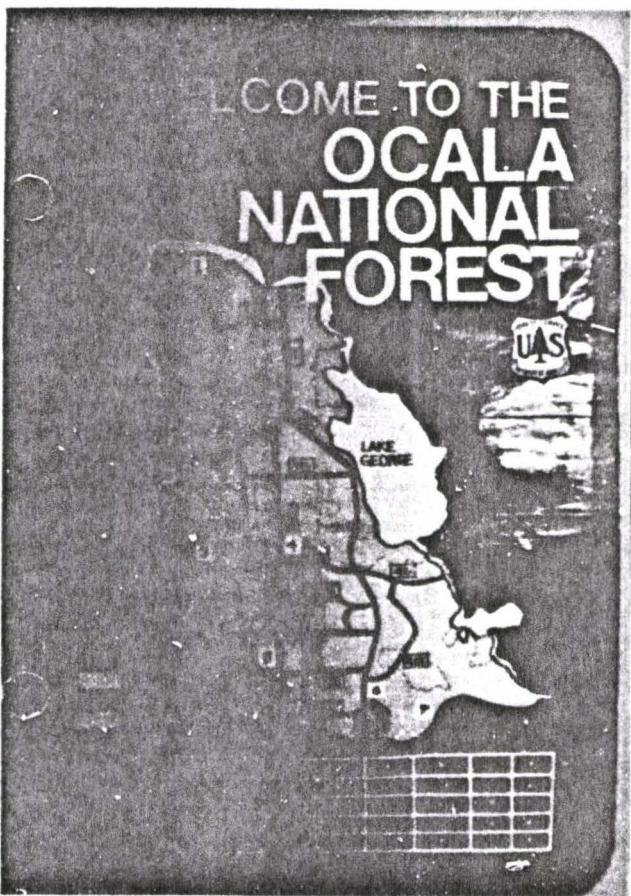
HIGHWAY INFORMATION STATION FORMATS

Figure 2

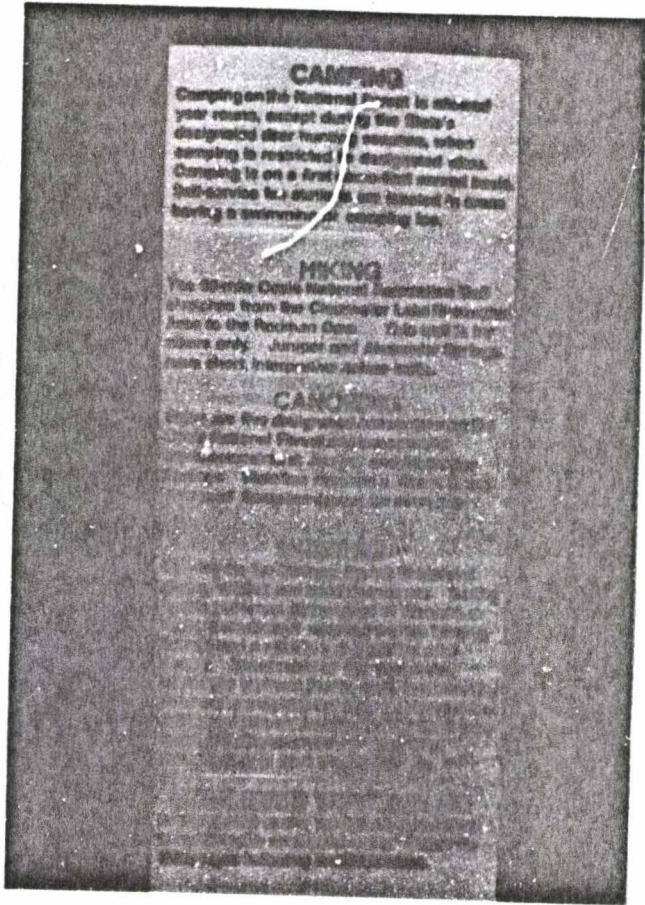


Figure 3

B. Travelers Information Radio Station

Travelers Information Stations are low powered AM radio transmitters of limited range (1 to 3 miles) to provide travelers with repetitive messages via their car radio on 1610 kHz or 530 kHz.

Taped messages are usually of such length that each vehicle can receive the entire message twice while within the area covered by the transmitter.

Due to the limited range of these transmitters, four transmitters would be necessary to provide adequate coverage for visitors entering the Forest on Highways 19 and 40. A single Message Originating Center can handle transmissions for all four transmitters.

The travelers Information Stations provide a means of almost instant updating of information to the public. It's versitality allows the public to normally receive the latest up-to-date information.

Initial costs:

Message Origination Center	\$3,000.00
Transmitter	3,100.00
Installation (Engineering)	<u>1,200.00</u>
	\$6,300.00

Cost of 4 transmitters plus

one (1) Message Origination Center \$18,100.00

Operation and Maintenance Costs:

The need to tape new messages every time a recreation situation changes could be held to a minimum by pretaping several messages in advance based on past experience. An example would be a tape giving the message that Alexander and Juniper Springs day use areas are

filled to capacity. This situation occurs almost every Sunday during the summer months. This message could be pretaped and placed into the transmitter when this situation occurs.

Annual operating costs summary

Electronic maintenance & repair	\$2,500
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Taping messages	<u>2,000</u>
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Estimated annual operation and maintenance.....	\$4,500
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Benefits:

Additional research is needed to determine what percentage of the traveling public on State Highways 19 and 40 we could expect to tune in the Travelers Information Station.

A survey made at Yellowstone National Park in 1973 indicated that 90% of the motorists within the park utilized the TIS within the park. However, their situation is considerably different in that a high percentage of the vehicle count on our highways is through traffic. An estimate of 5% usage by the traveling public means an average of 230 cars per day would utilize the stations. With an average of 2.6 persons per car, an average of 600 persons per day would hear the broadcasts.

By prorating this project over a 10-year period, the average cost per person served is as follows:

Initial costs	\$18,100
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Annual operating & maintenance costs(10 yrs @ 4500)	<u>45,000</u>
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Total costs.....	\$63,100
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Average use (219m/yr X 10)	2,190,000
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Average cost per utilization	\$.029 per visitor
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C. Recreation Opportunity Guide

The majority of our printed information material is designed for the typical developed site user, canoeist or backpacker. Little information is available for the day hiker, dispersed area camper, fisherman, hunter, scuba diver, biker, etc.. The ROG is a means to inventory all of the recreation opportunities and activities available on the District and place it in a format which can be given to the public seeking specific information. It not only assists the visitor seeking information, but also improves the ability of District personnel in locating information requested.

Initial costs:

Physical Inventory of Sites

GS-7 - 20 days @ \$70/day	\$1,400
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Description of sites and maintenance work (GS-11 - 30 days @ 90)	2,700
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Printing costs

14 catagories - 5M copies ea - \$150/5M X 14	<u>2,100</u>
	\$6,200

Operation and maintenance of R.O.G.

There should not be any additional costs to the District for operation of the R.O.G. system. The R.O.G. sheets will be dispersed by existing personnel presently doing this type work.

Maintenance of the system will entail revising opportunity sheets at times when they become obsolete or adding new sheets when new demands or opportunities become significant. We estimate we will have to print an average of 10M sheets per year.

Research and writeup 4 man days @ 90	\$360
Printing	<u>300</u>
Annual maintenance costs.....	\$660

Initial cost per copy

14 catagories X 5M = 70M copies @ \$6,200

or \$.088 per copy

However, costs per copy thereafter (reprints)

will be approximately \$.066.

A major savings with the R.O.G. system is a savings in manhours responding to written request for information. The District averages 20 letters per month requesting a variety of information. These requests now require an average of 1/2 hour for drafting and typing reply. The R.O.G. system could save 100 man hours per year of professional and clerical time in this area alone.

D. Outside Information Board at Ranger's Office

There is considerable traffic into the Ranger's office which is located on State Highway 19. Surveys conducted in 1974 and 1978 showed that an average of 300 people per month visited the office during office hours. Casual observations indicate a considerable number of people pull into the office after work hours, on weekends, and holidays. In order to provide some service to these people seeking assistance, an information board could be constructed adjacent to the office. This board would show location of developed facilities along with information concerning current situations, the availability of camp sites, fuelwood permits, Christmas tree permits, etc.. Consideration would also be given to installing a map dispenser.

Initial Cost

Materials	\$200
Labor - WL-7 & helper - 2 days @ 150	300
Display materials - GS-11 - 2 days @ 90	180
Graphics	<u>100</u>
	\$780

Operation and maintenance cost

Maintenance of structure - 2 man days/yr.	\$150
Maintenance of materials 5 man days/yr.	<u>450</u>
	\$600

Benefits:

Informal observations indicate that approximately 100 people per week would benefit from this office information station during periods when office is not manned. Therefore, 5,200 people per year could benefit. Pro-rated over a 10-year period, the operating costs would be \$6,780 to serve 52,000 people for an average cost of \$.13 per visitor.

E. Additional Brochures

New brochures could be developed for those recreation opportunities for which we are presently receiving a high number of requests and do not have printed material.

By utilizing Table 4 (Summary of Visitor Request), we would have to produce six brochures to cover areas receiving requests over 5% for which we presently do not have brochures.

Costs:

Research, write-up & Design - GS-11 10 days @ 90	\$900
Printing (multifold) (5M copies)	<u>500</u>
Total cost per brochure.....	\$1,400
Present needs (6 brochures) 6 X 1400 =	\$8,400

Benefits

Six new brochures with five thousand copies each will cost \$8,400 or \$.28 per copy. However, additional copies could be obtained for 1/3 the initial cost if information remains current.

F. Dissemination of Information Through Commercial Radio & TV Stations

Most commercial radio and TV stations will broadcast information of public interest. However, no guaranties are made that your public service message will be broadcast on a timely basis - if at all.

In order to get good coverage in an area 200 miles South of the Ocala National Forest and 100 miles North, we estimate a minimum of 25 stations should be given the messages. There are over 200 radio - TV stations within this area. This system should only be used to report items of importance and of short-term nature. We would utilize this system in March and April to report campground stations.

Costs (Six weekly messages - March 1 to April 15)

Man hours: GS-11

1½ hours per week telephone - 9 hrs. @ 11/hr.	\$99
Message write-up 1 hr/wk.	66
Phone toll charges	<u>300</u>
Total cost - 6 week period.....	\$465

Benefits:

Sufficient information is not available to estimate the number of potential visitors who would get the message. However, if 1,000 persons received the message, the cost would be approximately \$.45 per person.

The cost plus the uncertainty of your message being broadcast, makes this alternative useful only in emergency situations.

SUMMARY OF ALTERNATIVES

24.

<u>ALTERNATIVES</u>	<u>INITIAL COSTS</u>	<u>YEARLY MAINTENANCE COSTS</u>	<u>UTILIZATION PER YEAR</u>	<u>COST/UTILIZATION</u>
1) Roadside Information Station (4)	\$6,400	\$820	81,000	\$.026
2) Travelers Information Radio Station (4)	18,100	4,500	215,000	.029
3) Recreation Opportunity Guide	6,200	660	----	.088 *
4) Ranger's Office Information Station	780	600	5,200	.13
5) Brochures (6)	8,400	N/A	10,000	.28 **
6) Commercial Radio & T.V. ***	465	*	1,000	.45

* Initial Cost - Reprint cost will average \$.066/Copy

** Reprints - \$.085

*** For one message per week for six (6) weeks

I. CONCLUSION

The Seminole District and the Ocala National Forest presently receives, and will continue to receive a vast number of visitors who are not considered local. With this prevalent visitor pattern, it is logical that a high percentage of these people have little knowledge of the various recreation opportunities available to them.

There could be a decline in visitors from out-of-State due to the increasing cost of fuel, combined with decreasing quantities of fuel. However, this situation could result in an increasing use of the Ocala National Forest by Florida residents who previously have gone to other places for their leisure activities. If this change occurs, the demand for recreation activity information will remain high.

The alternatives discussed in this project are means of disseminating information to the public rather than our normal procedure of multiple use maps and other brochures. The Cost/Benefit ratios will vary between units depending on where visitors originate, access and location of administrative sites. Each alternative will have to be analyzed on a local basis to determine the most suitable.

Each alternative has their own individual advantages and disadvantages. The Travelers Information Radio Station has the highest initial cost for implementation. A sound decision cannot be made to implement this project until further research is made to determine an accurate number of visitors we could expect to utilize the system. However, the versatility of the system to incorporate other messages as needed is highly advantageous.

The implementation of the low initial cost alternatives (Roadside Information

Stations, Recreation Opportunity Guide and Ranger's Office Information Station) should improve the District's dissemination of recreation information to more people with less cost than present methods.